commenced loaning in March, 1998. Reports of Periodical field visits have confirmed that beneficiaries have benefitted from the financial assistance of NHFDC.

(c) The year-wise and profession-wise details of loan provided in 1998-99 and 1999-2000 are given below:—

(*Amt. In Lakh*)

S.No.	Nature of activity	1998-99		1999-2000	
		Benef.	Amt.	Benef.	Amt.
i.	Service sector	191	83.18	230	160.79
ii.	Sales/Trading activity	528	187.40	533	230.85
iii.	Agriculture sector	22	13.98	25	23.41
iv.	Non-farm sector	52	14.27	157	48.99
v.	Transport sector	13	10.73	13	15.57
vi.	Manufacturing/Production	03	2.40	22.	14.87
	Total:	809	311.96	980	494.48

Liberation and Rehabilitation of Scavengers

1537. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the scheme relating to liberation and rehabilitation of scavengers and their dependents has been modified and extended to the Ninth Five year Plan period; and

(b) whether her Ministry could review the schemes in the light of observation of research studies to meet the track of liberation and rehabilitation condition on specific time frame?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI): (a) and (b) The National Scheme of Liberation and Rehabilitation of Scavengers and their dependents has been in existence since 1991-92. It was modified with effect from 1.4.1996 and extended to the Ninth Five Year Plan period. The observations of the research studies are from time to time incoporated in the Scheme according to their relevance. The Ministry also reviews periodically the Scheme with a view to making it more effective. All efforts are made to end this demeaning occupation at the earliest possible.